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Intelligence Debate

A review in public of the functions and performance of the highly secret Central Intelligence Agency is likely to provoke intense controversy at the new session of Congress. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee is expected to set a date for opening hearings on a joint resolution introduced by Senator Eugene J. McCarthy last April 27, ten days after the abortive Cuban invasion.

The resolution provides for creation of a Joint Committee of the House and Senate on Foreign Intelligence and Information. The committee, in the words of McCarthy, would "establish some kind of continuing supervision over foreign policy activities and foreign intelligence and information programs by the United States government."

A similar proposal was given extended consideration by the Senate in 1956. Pressure for instituting a form of congressional supervision of the Central Intelligence Agency comparable to that exercised over the Atomic Energy Commission may be stronger today than it was six years ago.

Failure of the anti-Castro Cuban invasion, which was carried out under the direction of CIA, called into question again the almost unlimited extent of that agency's powers and, in particular, its participation in foreign ventures that carry risk of seriously damaging the prestige and interests of the United States.

Senator McCarthy said, when he introduced the pending joint resolution, that he considered it to be "a proper responsibility on the part of the members of the United States Congress to accept responsibility in this field, to be informed, and to be involved when major policy decisions are called for." He added: "Under the Constitution, Congress is called upon to participate in a declaration of war. In modern times, war is not declared. Congress, therefore, has a continuing and a very substantial responsibility for policy decisions with regard to the cold war or conducting foreign policy by any other

Since the Cuban invasion, the Central Intelligence Agency has acquired a new director -- former Atomic Energy Commission Chairman John A. McCone -- and its operations have been the subject of review by two Presidential boards. Their findings and recommendations presumably will be available to the Foreign Relations Committee, though perhaps not to the public, when the McCarthy resolution is taken up for consideration.

*co-sponsored by 18 Sen
Senators and 3 Rep.
Senators*

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